

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are currently pending in the above-identified application and have been rejected. Claims 1, 12 and 18 have been amended. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration in light of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Claims 1-5 and 8-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 as being anticipated by Yasuma et al. Independent claims 1, 12 and 18 have been amended.

Claim 1 is directed to an IC contact unit that includes, among other features, “a movable support including an IC contact point and a pawl member, said movable support being movable by said depressing member and said pawl member being movable by said depressing member between a first position in which it projects to a card transfer line and a second position in which it retreats upward from said card transfer line”. Claims 2-11 depend from claim 1.

Claim 12 is directed to an IC card reader including an IC contact unit. The IC contact unit includes, among other features, “a movable support including an IC contact point and a pawl member, said movable support being movable in a direction of the card transfer line by said depressing member and said pawl member being movable by said depressing member between a first position in which it projects to a card transfer line and a second position in which it retreats upward from said card transfer line”. Claims 13-17 depend from claim 12.

Claim 18 is directed to a method for reading information on an IC card and includes, among other features, the step of “utilizing the force from the movement of the IC card to move the movable support between a position in which the pawl member is

above the card transfer line to a position in which the pawl member projects to the card transfer line and an IC contact point located on a lower surface of the movable support contacts with the IC card”. Claims 19 and 20 depend from claim 18.

Yasuma et al. relates to an IC card reading apparatus that includes a motor 23 coupled with a rotary shaft 25. The motor 23 translates rotation through a transmission mechanism 24 to the shaft 25, allowing the shaft 25 to rotate. Rotation of the shaft 25 allows the feed roller 21 to rotate. Rotation of the feed roller 21 allows the IC card to be fed into the IC card reading apparatus. The Office action characterizes the movable plunger as being element 23a coupled with the shaft 25 and the depressing member to be the feed roller 21.

Applicant submits that the above characterizations are misplaced. Specifically, applicant states that the combination of element 23a (although shown, applicant could not find reference to the element in the specification) and shaft 25 do not amount to a movable plunger. The linkage of the motor 23 to the shaft 25 is a rotary linkage, and thus the shaft 25 neither moves nor is a plunger. Instead, as noted above, the shaft 25 rotates due to the translation of the motor 23 rotation. Further, the feed element 21 is neither a depressing member nor does it pivotably move in relation to the shaft 25. The feed element 21 rotates with the shaft 25 and does not pivotably move in relation to either the shaft 25 or the motor 23.

Additionally, Yasuma et al. fails to teach or suggest a “pawl member being movable by said depressing member between a first position in which it projects to a card transfer line and a second position in which it retreats upward from said card transfer line”

as recited in claims 1 and 12, or moving "the movable support between a position in which the pawl member is above the card transfer line to a position in which the pawl member projects to the card transfer line" as recited in claim 18. The pawl member of Yasuma et al., latching pawl 92, does not stray from the card transfer line. Thus, for at least the above reasons, Yasuma et al. should not anticipate claims 1-5 and 8-20.

Claims 6 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being unpatentable over Yasuma et al. in view of Owa. Claims 6 and 7 depend from claim 1.

Owa is relied upon in the Office action as disclosing a transport path-guiding element. Owa adds no relevant disclosure to Yasuma et al. regarding "pawl member being movable by said depressing member between a first position in which it projects to a card transfer line and a second position in which it retreats upward from said card transfer line" as recited in claim 1. Thus, claims 6 and 7 should be allowable over the cited references along with independent claim 1.

Applicants believe that each of the presently pending claims are in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

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Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

Claims 1, 12 and 18 have been rewritten.

1. (Amended) An IC contact unit, comprising:

an actuator including a movable plunger;

a depressing member pivotably movable in relation to said plunger;

a movable support including an IC contact point and a pawl member, said movable support being movable by said depressing member and said pawl member being movable by said depressing member between a first position in which it projects to a card transfer line and a second position in which it retreats upward from said card transfer line;
and

wherein the force of an IC card moved into contact with said pawl member moves said movable support such that said IC contact point contacts with the IC card.

12. (Amended) An IC card reader, comprising:

a card reader main body;

a plurality of transfer rollers disposed about a card transfer line formed in said card reader main body; and

an IC contact unit, comprising:

an actuator including a movable plunger;

a depressing member pivotably movable in relation to said plunger;
a movable support including an IC contact point and a pawl member,
said movable support being movable in a direction of the card transfer line by
said depressing member and said pawl member being movable by said
depressing member between a first position in which it projects to a card
transfer line and a second position in which it retreats upward from said card
transfer line; and

wherein the force of an IC card moved by said transfer rollers into
contact with said pawl member moves said movable support such that said IC
contact point contacts with the IC card.

18. (Amended) A method for reading information on an IC card, comprising the
steps of:

moving the IC card along a card transfer line;
contacting the IC card with a pawl member of a movable support;
utilizing the force from the movement of the IC card to move the movable
support [such that] between a position in which the pawl member is above the card transfer
line to a position in which the pawl member projects to the card transfer line and an IC
contact point located on a lower surface of the movable support contacts with the IC card;
and
reading information on the IC card.